Christ the Saviour

AND

Governour of His Church.

OR,

Two Sermons on *Isaiah* 9. 6. The former concerning the saving benefit of the Incarnation of the Son of God; The latter concerning Christ His governing his People, by the Scepter of his Word.

Preached in the Parish-Church of *Flordon* in the County of *Norfolk. Decem.* 25. & *Jan.* 4. 1646.

By Thomas Rous Master of Arts, and Minister of the said Parish of *Flordon*.

Now published for the Vindication of the Author.

Phil. 2. 8 9,10. *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross; Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name, which is above every Name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.*

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To the Honourable Committee for Plundered Ministers, sitting at *Westminster*.

ALthough my present condition, wherein I stand clouded with the scandalous informations of malicious Adversaries, might justly discourage me from adventuring these Papers into your Presence: yet that impartiall Justice, which ought to be conspicuous in all Courts of Judicature, together with the Conscience of mine own Innocency, hath emboldned me hereunto. It is now full three Months, since I received a Coppy of an Order for the Sequestring of the Rectory of *Flordon* in the County of *Norfolk* from me, wherein were mentioned the things whereof I am accused, and for which that Order was granted out against me: Concerning which, as in the generall, all of them are most unjustly layd to my Charge, so in particular, touching that blasphemous, and dangerous Assertion, that *The Scriptures lead men to destruction*, (my Witness is on High, my Record is with the Almighty) it was so far from my Tongue to utter, that it never entred into my heart to conceive. It was my endeavour to have cleered my self of this horrible scandall, before the Committee for Examination at *Norwich*; for one of the Witnesses produced against me, having affirmed that about New-years-time, three years since, preaching on *Isa* 9.6. *The Government shall be upon his shoulder*, I did say those words; repairing to my Papers, out of my briefer notes, I drew out the substance of all that ever I delivered upon

that Text, & having there tendered the ſame, I offered to atteſt it upon Oath: but the Commiſſioners were pleaſed rather to receive my Sermon upon my bare word (none of the Witneſſes againſt me being examined upon Oath) that they might tranſmit it to be peruſed with my Cauſe: But contrary to their Intention, and my Expectation, by what means I know not, that my Sermon, though tranſmitted, never came to your judiciall view: whereupon all was taken for granted, which my Adverſaries had Affirmed againſt me.

I have therefore here humbly preſented the ſame unto you, having added thereunto my Sermon upon the foregoing words, humbly craving your Honourable Teſtimony thereunto. I had taken a far more compendious way for my Vindication, than this, had not a long and tedious ſickneſs prevented me; In which time my Adverſary *Witherell*, knowing I was not able to ſtir out of my Chamber, much leſs to be preſent at *Weſtminſter* to make my defence, (he having had three ſeverall daies before againſt me, but without ſucceſs) procured a day againſt me, whereof I had not the leaſt notice, that ſo he might with the more facility effect what maliciouſly he had intended againſt me. This his proſecution of me, however acted under Religious Pretences, yet upon conſideration of ſome Circumſtances, it will eaſily appear to all indifferent and unbyaſſed men, to have been but a *Machevillian* practice of his, turning Religion into Policy, and making it but a Noſe of wax, or a ſtalking horſe to ſerve his own ends: imitating ſeditious *Clodius*, who although he were not only an Enemy to Religion, but alſo a contemner, and deſpiſer of the ſame, yet would he pretend Religion in the behalf of all the Villanies he committed in his Tribuneſhip.

This Man was ſometimes an Apprentice in *Norwich*, from whence (having married his Maſter's Daughter) he went into Holland: And in proceſs of time having there run himſelf very deeply into debt, he repaired unto ſome of his Friends in *England* for relief: and about two years and four months ſince came to this Town of *Flordon*, to

a

a certain Farm, which one Mr *Brian Witherell*, sometimes of *Silam* in *Suffolk* his Uncle (at whose cost and charge he was maintained in *Holland*) gave unto three of his Children: Here therefore he setled himself, and sold Tobacco, and such like Merchandize; but neither the benefit he received by his Trading, nor his Uncles bounty could satisfie him, unless he might swallow a Peece of Gleabland belonging unto me, and without any contradiction ever yeelded to my Predecessors: In which his irregular and unjust desires because I withstood him, having in *April* 1649. taken away some Firing that grew there, his malice and hatred hath ever since been so great towards me, as that he endeavoured to deprive me of all that I had, & to render me odious, whersoever he could: 'twas his dayly practice to enquire first of one, then of another concerning me, if possibly he might have whereof to accuse me: He went about to perswade divers of my Townsmen to joyn with him against me, telling them, that if I were once ejected they should pay for their Tithes but after the rate of twelve pence in the Pound: at the length he composed Articles (apparently more malicious than true) and procured some Witnesses who (God forgive them) did in part affirm them: Nay, he was not ashamed, at the time, when his Witnesses were examined, to Dictate unto them what to say (as he did this gross Slander concerning the holy *Scriptures) till upon my request one of the Commissioners Commanded him to forbear; and that all this was done against me out of private Interest, appears from his own Mouth; for he said, that had I not taken away that Firing, he had never molested or disquieted me; and that he might the better mannage this his unjust prosecution, and the more disable me for the making of my defence, he hath detained, and doth yet against all right, equity or conscience keep back from me all Tithes and Profits due from him for the two years last past.

* Though he never heard me Preach, but only *Nov.* 24. *Anno* 1648.

May it therefore please you of this Honourable Committee, to take this great and insufferable wrong into your serious consideration; so as that upon a re-hearing I may

receive so much favour as the justness of my Cause may seem to deserve: More I must not expect from your Justice; less I cannot expect from your Goodness. The more the wrongs be that I have received by those slanderous Imputations, the more necessity is laid upon me to crave your Honourable Aide and Assistance. As none would ever have offered to tax me in such an opprobrious manner but this malicious Accuser; so there is none for whom it is more proper to help me in this case than your Selves, to whom I have here humbly represented my oppressed condition, resting

Flordon Octob. 19. Anno 1650.

Yours in the Service of

Christ and his Church

most humbly Devoted

THOMAS ROUS.

To the Christian, and Indifferent Reader.

Christian Reader,

These following Sermons, when at the first delivered from the Pulpit, I thought full little to have sent to the Press; what was then transient to the Ear, I had no purpose to make permanent to the Eye. Nor would I now have adventured them into the common Light, were I not necessitated thereunto, for the Vindication of my Doctrine, therein delivered, from those foul aspersions, which some of malicious and perverse Spirits, sometimes my Auditors, have cast upon it.

Ever since I entred into the Office of the Ministry, it hath alwaies been my care, and endeavour, faithfully to perform the duties of my Calling among those of my Charge, both by instructing them wherein soever I perceived them to be Erroneous, or Ignorant: and by resolving them in matters wherein they seemed hesitaneous, or doubtfull.

Especially, before any time of Administring the holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper, it hath been my usuall course, both publikely and privately, both at the Church on the Sabbath, and Week daies, and at home in their Families, and mine own house, to urge upon them the necessity of preparation, and to shew unto them the means whereby they might be rightly prepared.

Once in December, Anno 1646. *Intending within a little while the Celebration of the Lords Supper, (according to my usuall manner) I went to divers of my Parish, at their Houses, and admonished them not to turn*

their

their backs on so Sacred and saving an Ordinance, as some had formerly done: (a) *Two of them then answered me, that they durst not receive that holy Sacrament, because they could not resolve with themselves, in what Gesture or position of the body they should Receive, whether standing, sitting, or kneeling, the Word of God not Commanding any of these: And sure they were, that to do any thing not expressly commanded in the Word of God, were to dishonour God, and to sin against their own souls.*

a Stephen Matchet, and Martha Hawke spake to me to this purpose.

My answer was, That Actions which are in their own nature meerly indifferent and circumstantiall, are not alwaies expresly prescribed in the holy Scriptures, but are left to the Judgement of the Church; what therefore lawfull Authoritie, in such cases, had prescribed, the Word of God, and right reason not contradicting, ought by us with all humbie submission to be put in practice, by vertue of that Apostolicall Injunction, (b) Let every soul be subject, *&c. And having spoke many words to this purpose, but leaving them unsatisfied, The Sabbath day following* (*speaking on those words* Isa 9.6. The Government shall be upon his shoulder) *out of a tender respect toward them, the conscience of my place and duty, and an earnest desire of satisfying and resolving them in their doubts,* (*as God who knoweth all things, knows that I lie not*) *I did* (c) *purposely endeavor to shew them in what things we are guided only by the light of Scripture, and in what things we are left to the guidance and direction of our own Judgement and Reason.*

b Rom. 13 1.

c Passing by what else I had thought to have spoken.

But how ill this my care and pains for their satisfaction was requited, is made too too evident to the World: For no sooner came I out of my Pulpit, but they presently charge me with what I neither spake nor thought, viz. the averring an insufficiency in the Sacred Scriptures. Nay, according to that wicked Maxime of bold undertakers, That bad Actions must be seconded with worse, and rather not begun, than not carried on; thinking the Retreat more dangerous than the Assault, and hating repentance, rather than perseverance in a fault, they have again raised up, and augmented

this

this their ſlander (more than three years buried in ſilence) with a far greater meaſure of malice, and bitterneſs againſt me. For ſo ſoon as (d*) one unworthy and cauſleſs Enemy of mine (deſiring to raiſe his broken and decayed Eſtate by my ruine) and by his means (* e*) ſome others had maliciouſly endeavoured my Ejection, and to this end had exhibited divers falſe Articles againſt me, which they could not prove; (* f*) Theſe falſe witneſſes, being procured, as thoſe Sons of* (g) Belial, *do affirm,* (h) *that I blaſphemed God, and the Sacred Scriptures, [ſaying that There is an inſuffic ency in the Scriptures concerning Man's Salvation; That the Scriptures lead men to deſtruction, and that a man may be led by his own ſenſe in matters concerning Salvation] that ſo when all other means failed to bring about this their unchriſtian Deſign, as* Naboth's *Vineyard, ſo that poor livelyhood, that God hath given me, might by this their falſe Teſtimony become their poſſeſſion.*

I have therefore (Courteous Reader) brought theſe (though rude and unpoliſhed) Notes (which I proteſt in the word of a Chriſtian, are the ſame, without any alteration of the ſenſe or ſubſtance, that were delivered by me upon the time and Text (i) *afore mentioned)* (k) *into Publike view: that upon the peruſall thereof, the World may ſee, how ſhamefully I am wronged, and take notice how undeſervedly I am charged with that damnable, and dangerous Doctrine of the Church of* Rome, viz. *That there is an inſufficiency, &c.*

The latter of theſe Sermons (concerning which I am now queſtioned) was at the firſt intended for the ſatisfying of their doubts, who are at this time, without any cauſe, my cruell Adverſaries, but now through their malice is become an occaſion of my preſent (l) *myſeries, I pray God it prooves not at the length an occaſion of their own perp exities.*

Raro Antecedentem ſceleſtum deſeruit
Pœna pede claudo.

d *Tho. Withcrell*

e *John Hawk. John Johnſon.*

f *Stephen Matchet, Nicholas Hawk* Son of the ſaid *Martha Hawk.*

g 1 King. 21. 10.

h At *Norwich Jan.* 15. 1649.

i In the Title-Page.

k Though my Adverſary *Withcrell* would have perſwaded ſome of the Commiſſioners at *Norwich* that they were not the ſame.

l My Living being Sequeſtred *July* 16. *Anno* 1650.

Horat.

Their ſeared conſciences will, (I beleeve) in a ſhorter time than they are aware of, both confute, and revenge this black and falſe ſcandall, they have caſt upon me.

In the mean time I ſhall comfort my ſelf with the Conſcience of my Innocency; I know a good Conſcience hath alwaies enough within-doors to reward it ſelf, though the ſucceſs fals not out, according to the merit of the endeavour.

As for Neatneſs of Stile, Quaintneſs of Phraſe, or Rhetoricall ſtreines, it muſt not be expected, herein to find any, the occaſion of publiſhing theſe Sermons (Preached to a very ſmall Audience, the greater part whereof being of very mean and common Capacities) not permitting to Print more or leſs than was ſpoken.

However, Chriſtian Reader, if any thing may be found in this worthleſs Peece, that may build thee up further in the ſaving Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, thou ſhalt not altogether loſe thy labour, nor ſhall I miſs of my aime, and deſire: Certainly ſomething may be found therein, that may help forward thy Souls health; If thou gaineſt any thing, let God have the Praiſe, and him thy Prayers, who is

Thine and the Churches

THOMAS ROUS.

Christ the Saviour, and Governour of his Church.

Isaiah 9. 6.

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, the Government shall be upon his Shoulder, his Name shall be called Wonderfull, Counsellour, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

ALL the waies of God are Mercy and Truth; no other path hath Divine Providence to walk about the World in, but in Mercy and Truth; no other way hath the Almighty to come down unto the Children of Men in, but it must be in the Goodness of his Mercy, or in the Truth of his Justice. Both these Paths doth the Spirit of God in the Sacred Volume guide us in, that we may as well see VVickedness punished, as Goodness Rewarded. Do you in the one path meet with an (*a*) *Abell* accepted; an (*b*) *Henoch* translated; a (*c*) *Shem* blessed; a (*d*) *Noah* saved? Turn your Foot into the other Path, and you shall meet with an (*e*) *Adam* cast out of Paradise, and eating his Bread with sorrow; a (*f*) *Cain* accurted, and branded with a fearfull Mark; and a world of dead Corps floating

Psal. 25. 10.

a Gen. 4. 4.
b Gen. 5. 24.
c Gen. 9. 26.
d Gen. 8. 18.
e Gen. 3.
f Gen. 4.

g Gen.7. in the generall (*g*) Floud. *The eyes of the Lord are upon the Righteous, and his Ears are open unto their Prayers; but the Countenance of the Lord is against them that do evill, to root out the remembrance of them from the Earth,* Psa 34.15,16. The eighth and ninth Chapters of this Prophecie may well be termed *Canticum Isaiæ*, the Prophets Song, not much unlike that of *Davids*, of Mercy and Judgement; a Song of Judgement in the (*h*) *Assyrians* Invasion; a Song of Mercy in our Saviour's (*i*) Incarnation. As God is gracious in shewing Mercy abundantly to his faithfull Servants; so is he just in rendring Vengeance unto his Adversaries: He so pittieth the one, as that in the mean time he doth not justifie or acquit the other; He so punisheth the Guilty, as that in the mean time he forgets not to be gracious unto the Innocent.

h Chap.8.7.
i Chap.9.6.

In the foregoing Chapter, there is mention made of grievous (*k*) trouble and affliction that should come upon *Israel* and *Judah*, by the Power and Hostility of the King of *Assyria*.

k Ver.7,8. & 22.

In this Chapter, lest they should despair under the Burden of so great Affliction, the Almighty Comforts them with a gratious Promise of a timely Deliverance, he telleth them, that their Calamity shall not alwaies (*l*) continue, Heavinesse may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning; Instead of a dark Night of Adversity, they shall be blest with a lightsome Day of Prosperity; In stead of Mourning, they shall have an abundance of Joy; In stead of Bondage and Captivity, they shall have perfect Freedom and Liberty; and all this by and through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, who was to be Incarnate and given to them.

l Ver.1,2,3,4.

He only is that true light, in Comparison of whom all other Lights and Comforts are meer darknesses; He alone is that Supreme Object of Joy and Gladnes, in comparison of whom all worldly Injoyments are irksome and grievous; He alone is that Victorious Champion, trampling under foot the Power of Sin, Satan, and Death, leading Captivity Captive, and restoring us to a for-ever

blessed

bleſſed and glorious Liberty of the Sons of God. Glorious indeed was that Victory which ſometimes Gods People, the Jews, obtained over the (*m*) *Midianites*, under the Command of *Gideon:* But much more glorious is this which we have through the Almighty Power of Jeſus Chriſt; In that their potent Adverſaries were miſerably confounded; but in this, all our Enemies are expoſed to a more horrible deſtruction; they ſhall be made the (*n*) fuell of everlaſting flames. Chriſt Jeſus only gives this Victory, Light and Joy to his Church and People; If once we have an Intereſt in Chriſt, we ſhall not want our ſhare in other Mercies. (*o*) *He that ſpared not his own Sonne*, ſaith that ſacred Oratour, *but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things?* Even in our loweſt Conditions, and greateſt Afflictions, we cannot want matter of great Joy and Rejoycing, ſeeing that *unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given*, &c. Theſe words contain a deſcription of him who is the very Baſis, Ground & Foundation of all Chriſtian Comfort, Jeſus Chriſt. He is here deſcribed by his Natures, Names and Offices; his Natures are ſet out unto us in the former part of the Text, *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.* His Names and Offices in the words following, *The Government ſhall be upon his Shoulder*, &c.

m Judg. 7. 19, 20, 21, &c.

n Iſa. 9. 5.

o Rom. 8. 32.

Firſt, of the former part of the deſcription of Chriſt, *viz.* By his Natures, where we have his Incarnation, and the end thereof; His Incarnation, or Aſſumption of Humane Nature into the Unity of his Perſon, in that he is here called *a Child*, and *a Son*; he is ſaid to be *a Child* becauſe truly Man, born of a Woman, taken out of the Maſs or Lump of Mankind, propagated from *Adam*; he is called *Son*, to denote his Divinity, for not only is he the Son of *David*, as the Jews Imagined, but alſo of the moſt high and glorious (*p*) God; the end of Chriſt his Incarnation is here manifeſted, in that the Prophet ſaith, *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given*; that is, for us, for our Salvation who beleeve in him, and expect Salvation

p Pſal. 2. 7.

Observ. by him became he Incarnate: Hence the Observation is, That the Eternall Son of God became really and truly (*q*) Man for the Salvation of them that beleeve; of this Doctrine there be three parts or members, *viz.*

q Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4.

1. The Son of God was made Man.

2. The Son of God was made man for the Salvation of mankind.

3. Only such as beleeve shall have benefit by the Incarnation of the Son of God. First of the first, The Son of God was made Man.

r Mat. 16. 16. It was St *Peters* Confession, (*r*) *Thou are Christ the Son of the living God*: And St *John's* Affirmation to this purpose was plain, (*s*) *The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us.* (*t*) The Father and the Holy Ghost (saith *Damascen*) had no Communion in the Incarnation of the Word, but only by approbation and consent.

s Joh. 1. 14.

t Κάτ' οὐδένα λόγον κεκοινώνηκεν ὁ πάτηρ καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τῇ σαρκώσει τοῦ λόγου εἰ μὴ κατ' εὐδοκίαν καὶ βούλησιν. Damasc.

Not the Father, nor the holy Ghost, but the Son only, the second Person in the Sacred Trinity became man.

u Joh. 1. 3. 1. By the Son were all things (*u*) made; wherefore It was meet that he should become Man, that as he was the Author of the Being, so also he might become the Author of the well-being of Mankind; that as the Institution, so also the restitution or restoring of faln Man might be wrought by his own hand. (*x*) We see Jesus, saith the Apostle, who was made little lower than the Angels, for the suffering of Death crowned with glory and honour, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man; he adds the reason, saying (*y*) *Decebat enim*, for it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, *&c.*

x Heb. 2. 9, 10

y Ἔπρεπε γάρ.

z Col. 1. 15. 2. He is the (*z*) Image of the Invisible God, the express (*a*) Caracter of his Person, and therefore it was most meet that he should become Man, that through his Suffering, Merits, and powerfull operation he might repair Gods Image in us, which we lost in *Adam*; this Essentiall and perfect Image of God, did the Almighty send into the World, to be the only and all-sufficient means whereby

a Χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ.

whereby to reſtore and repair faln and forlorn mankind; (*b*) we ſhall never become like unto God, unleſs we be made like unto him by this his Image, ſaith St *Ambroſe*. Nor may this Doctrine of our Saviours Incarnation be taken without this threefold Caution.

a *Niſi per hanc imaginem, ad Dei imaginem eſſe non potes.* Ambr.

Firſt, we muſt not conceive that the Aſſumption of the Humanity in the Son of God became any detriment to his Divinity; he is (*c*) God-man; he ſo emptied himſelf of his glory, as to take upon him the form of a (*d*) Servant; yet not as thereby to loſe the form of his Godhead; he is therefore called (*e*) *Imanuel*, God with us, he would have his reſidence in our Nature; *The Word was made* (f) *fleſh, and* (g) *dwelt in us*, he took not upon him the nature of Angels, but the Seed of (*h*) *Abraham*, not any particular Perſon, as the perſon of *Abraham*, *Peter*, &c. leſt only that Perſon ſo aſſumed by him ſhould be glorified; but that he might ſave many he built his Houſe in that Nature which was common to many; he choſe not this or that particular Perſon for his Habitation, but dwelt in us, that is, in our Nature. He aſſumed our Nature which he had not before, but did not by his aſſuming thereof ceaſe to be what he was before.

c Θεανθρωπος.

d Phil. 2 5,6, 7,8.

e עמנואל. Iſa. 7. 14.

f Joh. 1. 14.

g ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν.

h Heb 2. 16.

(*i*) The Jews, ſaith *Athanaſius*, worſhipped God in a Temple made of Stone, where were the Ark and the Cherubins; and though they ſaw the Temple to be of Stone, yet did not they therefore imagine that God whom they worſhipped was of the ſame matter; And now Jeſus Chriſt having aſſumed our Nature and Fleſh to dwell and to be worſhipped in the ſame as in his Temple, we muſt not therefore fancy him to be a bare Creature, a meer man and nothing elſe; Doubtleſs his Manhood can be no detriment to his Godhead: Jeſus Chriſt the (*k*) ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever, from everlaſting to everlaſting he is God.

i *Si in lapideo Templo Judæi adorarunt Dominum, ubi erant Arca & Cherubini, & qui Templum viderunt eſſe lapideum non ideo arbitrati ſunt Dominum eſſe lapideum; ergo mul. o magis in carne utpote in templo adorandus eſt Chriſtus Dominus; non ideo autem mera creatura cenſendus.* Athanaſ.

Secondly, although we hold two diſtinct Natures to be in Chriſt, yet we deny in him to be two diſtinct Perſons. Therefore whatſoever appertains to him, though only according to his Humane Nature, we muſt apply to the

k Heb. 13 8.

l Luk. 1. 35.
m Act. 20. 28.
n 1 Joh. 3. 16.
o 1 Cor. 2. 8.

the Person of the Son of God, as to be (*l*) born, to (*m*) dye, to shed his (*n*) bloud, to be (*o*) crucified, &c. for to say that the person of Man in Christ is the Subject of these things, what were this, but to entrap our selves in the Nestorian Heresie?

Thirdly, Through the Union of the two Natures in Christ the properties of neither are impaired, or diminished, but remain intire and unaltered; Only the Humane Nature being united to the Divine is much bettered; as a Sword made hot in the fire, both cuts by reason of its sharpness, and burns by reason of the heat it received from the fire: So the Humane Nature by reason of its Union with the Person of the Son of God hath a greater excellency than otherwise it could possibly have, it being thereby furnished with all possible perfections whereof it is capable. In (*p*) Christ Jesus, saith *Leo*, both Natures do operate according to their severall properties, his Godhead working what appertains to him as God; his Manhood executing what belonged to him as Man: the one of his Natures shines forth by miracles; the other is made apparent by his suffering Injuries. According to the one he (*q*) weeps for *Lazarus* being dead, and according to the other he restores him to life. So much for the Incarnation of Christ, now followeth the end thereof, which is the second Member of the Doctrine, *viz.*

p *In Christo agit utraque forma quod proprium est; verbo operante quod verbi est, & carne exequente quod carnis.* Leo.

q Joh. 11. 35, 43, 44.

2. That the Son of God became Man for the Salvation of Mankind; And this appears by those words of our blessed Saviour himself, saying, (*r*) *so God loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son*; to what end? *that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life*: and that this was the end of our Saviours Incarnation is made plain by that saying of his fore-runner *John* the Baptist, (*s*) *Behold that Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the World*; and also by that of the Apostle Saint *Paul*, (*t*) *This is a faithfull saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save sinners.* Nor could the Salvation of Man have been, had not the Son of God become Man.

r Joh. 3. 16.

s Joh. 1. 29.

t 1 Tim. 1. 15.

First

First, because Divine Justice required that satisfaction should be made in that nature which had sinned; Now Sin was committed in our Nature, (*u*) *Adam* sinned, and all his Posterity being then in his (*x*) Loyns; therefore it was necessary that the Son of God, the Saviour of the World, should be made Man; and without his Incarnation the Salvation of Mankind had been impossible, not in regard of Gods Power, as if he could by no other means save Man, but in regard of his secret Will and Counsell, whereby he determined to (*y*) save Man by no other means, than by the Death of his Son.

u 1 Cor. 15. 21, 22.

x Heb. 7. 9, 10.

y Rom. 8. 3, 4. Act. 4. 12.

Secondly, (*z*) without shedding of Bloud there could be no Remission, and therefore that Jesus Christ might purchase Remission of Sins for his Elect, it was most requisite that he should become Man: For as he was God he could not be subject to Death, or any Passion, the Godhead it self being altogether impassible; therefore he became Man that he might dye for his Elect, and purchase to himself a People with the price of his own (*a*) Bloud.

z Heb. 9. 22.

a Act. 20. 18.

Thirdly, It was necessary that the Son of God should be Man, that he might be a fit (*b*) Mediatour between God and Man; a Mediatour being a Middle Person, as it were, between two Parties, speaking unto them both; hence it was requisite, that Christ Jesus the Saviour of the World should not only be God, to speak unto his Father for us, and to present our Supplications unto him; but also Man, that God might speak unto us, and we unto God by him. (*c*) The Divinity of Christ, saith S *Augustine*, without his Humanity, or his Humanity without his Divinity, cannot Mediate between God and Us; but between them both, by his Divine Humanity, and Humane Divinity, he wrought our Reconciliation with God. So much for the second Member of the Doctrine, *viz.* The end of Christ his Incarnation is the Salvation of Mankind; there remains yet the third, *viz.* They only that beleeve shall have benefit by the Incarnation of the Son of God; this appears by that (*d*) fore-named place: and to go no further than my Text, *Nobis nascitur, nobis datur;*

b 1 Tim. 2. 5. Gal. 3. 20.

c *Divinitas sine humanitate non est mediatrix, nec humanitas sine divinitate est mediatrix: sed inter solam divinitatem & humanitatem solam mediatrix est divina humanitas, & humana divinitas Christi.* Aug.

d Joh. 3. 61.

tur; unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, viz. us that beleeve. Christ Jesus is given to divers men, in a different and divers respect.

First, He may be said to be given to all Men, in as much as he took upon him that Nature which is common to all men; thus he may be said to be given to the whole World. He is offered to all Mankind. God the Father cals upon all without exception from out of Heaven, saying, (*e*) *Hear him.* Yea, the Lord himself gives a Commission to his (*f*) Apostles to go into all the World, and Preach the glad tydings of the Gospell to every Creature.

e Luk. 9. 35.
f Mat. 28. 19.

Secondly, He is in a singular manner given unto *Abraham*, *David*, and their Posterity, for as much as God made an especiall promise of him unto them, he (*g*) came of them according to the Flesh; first was he offered unto (*h*) them; and among them was he first made known to be the Saviour of the World.

g Acts 3. 25.
b Acts 13. 26.

Thirdly, He is given effectually for Salvation unto all and only such as beleeve, whether they be Jews or (*i*) Gentiles. It will be no advantage to any man to have Christ Jesus given unto him the two former waies, if he be not this way given unto him; without we have this way an Interest in Christ, by a true and lively faith, the other two waies of having an Interest in him will nothing availe us to our Salvation: But will rather serve as a means to aggravate our Ingratitude and Condemnation. To such only as beleeve will Christ Jesus prove (*k*) a hiding place from the Wind, a Covert from the Tempest, *&c.* To such only will he be for a (*l*) Sanctuary, and a sure Refuge; They only shall become the Adopted Sons of God that (*m*) beleeve on his Name. All and only they who walk in the steps of *Abrahams* Faith, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, whether they be carnally descended of him or not, are accounted for the Seed, and the true *Israel* of God, to whom Jesus Christ is effectually given, and for whose Salvation sake the Son of God was made Man. *Unto us a Child is born,*

i Isa. 42. 1. Luc. 2. 32.
k Isa. 32. 2.
l Isa. 8. 14.
m Joh. 1. 12.

unto

unto us a Son is given. So much for the Doctrine, the Application followeth.

Since then the Son of God was Incarnate for our Salvation, what remains but that we behold with admiration, and admire with thankfulneſs, this great and ineffable mercy of our good God; that for our ſakes he would ſend his only begotten Son into this lower Region of ſorrow and death; that he would cauſe him to lay aſide his glorious Robes of Majeſty, to be clad with the Rags of our Fleſh; and to become Man, that we might be made the Sons of God? If *David* that Princely Prophet conſidering the work of Creation, and beholding therein Gods love to Mankind, muſt needs burſt out into that Exclamation, *Lord what is man*,&c. If he conſidering Gods wonderfull mercy towards him in his deliverance from the fury of *Saul*, choſe one day in the year, whereof he ſpeaks with principall note, ſaying, *This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice*,&c. How much more ſhould we ſtand amazed at the conſideration of the Infinite, and Fathomleſs depth of Gods love in the Redemption of Mankind by the Death of his Son? How ſhould the remembrance of the Day of Chriſt his Nativity and Incarnation affect our hearts with Joy and Gladneſs? Surely as the ſpeciall Preſence of God doth ſanctifie and hallow ſome places above others, ſo do the extraordinary works of God worthily challenge ſome days and times to be ſet apart for the commemoration thereof, which we ought to eſteem above other Seaſons: As eſpecially the work of this day, which we now commemorate, wherein the Bleſſing of all Bleſſings, the Light of Lights, that Victorious Champion, whereby we have perfect deliverance from the Power and Malice of all our Ghoſtly and Bodily Enemies, came into the World.

Application.

Pſal.8.

Pſa.118.28.

The news of Chriſt his Nativity, the bleſſed Angels call Tidings of great (*n*) Joy to all People. Joy to old *Adam*, for according to the Promiſe this day was brought forth that (*o*) Seed of the woman that ſhould break the

n Luk.2.10.

o Gen.3.15.

Serpents head. Joy to *Abraham*, for this day in his
* Gen.22,18. Seed are all the (*) Nations of the Earth bleſſed. Joy to the Prophets, for this day their Prophecies are accompliſhed. Joy to the ſick, for this day came the Phyſician of our Souls into the World. Joy to Infants, for this day the great God of Heaven and Earth
p Gal.4.4. became a little (p) Babe. Joy to all men, for this day he that was from the beginning, the everlaſting Father, was born of a Virgin, and (q) wrapped in ſwad-
q Luk.2 7.
r Luk.2.13. ling clouts. The holy Angels (r) ſang in the Air when they made known his Nativity, and ſhall we ſit deſolate in heart, to whom he is born, and for whoſe ſakes he became Incarnate? O let us rouze up our dull and drowſie Spirits to bleſs and praiſe the Name of God for this ſo unſpeakable a Mercy; Let us not praiſe God only with our Tongues, but even with our very Souls alſo; with all that is within us let us bleſs his holy name. Let every one
ſ Luk.1.46. of us with the bleſſed Virgin ſay, (ſ) *My ſoul doth magnifie the Lord, and my ſpirit hath rejoyced in God my Saviour.* Let us bleſs the Almighty with *Zacharias*, ſaying,
* Luk 1.68. * *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael*, &c. Let us joyn with the bleſſed Angels, thoſe glorious Creatures, in ſinging,
t Luk.2.14. (t) *Glory be to God on High.* Doubtleſs if we be not by this extraordinary mercy of God provoked unto thankſgiving and praiſe, the Heavens will wonder, the Earth will ſtand amazed; yea, we may juſtly fear, that the very Stones themſelves will to our ſhame and confuſion, beſpeak the praiſes of God, and cry out upon our Ingratitude. *John Baptiſt*, no ſooner had the Virgin *Mary* the Mother of the Lord ſaluted *Elizabeth*, but preſently he
u Luk.1.44. (u) leap'd in the Womb for Joy. Old *Simeon*, no ſooner had he ſeen the Saviour of the World, but preſently as it were overcome with Joy, he began to breath out his
x Luc.2.29. (x) *Domine nunc dimittis*, &c. Wherefore let us alſo, who look for the ſame benefit from Chriſt Jeſus, praiſe God for him as cheerfully, as cordially. Let us now Joy before the Lord (y) according to the Joy in Harveſt, and as
y Iſa.9.3. men rejoice when they divide the Spoil. Let us by all poſſible

possible means labour to preserve this Affection of Joy in our hearts: I mean not that fond and vain Joy of Worldlings, and voluptuous Epicures, arising only from the momentany enjoyment of the pleasures and profits of this life; but that sound and solid Joy of Christians, which is a cheerfull affection caused by the apprehension of our gracious reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ; To this end let us first,

Take heed of placing our affections on the things of this life. Impossible it is for earthly and worldly-minded men to have true or solid Joy. *Non est gaudere impiis*, as the old Translation hath it, (z) *there is no joy to the wicked*: Well may they have some merry fits of madness, but never can they have any taste of true joy. It is no matter of Mirth, but a sign of Famine, when men feed upon such nourishments as are appointed for Beasts; even so it is no joy, but a case of extremity, when the reasonable soul feeds upon such delights, as properly belong to the brutish appetite: with such did that rich (a) Glutton feed himself, he seemed a while to take delight in his purple, fine Linnen, and delicate fare, but presently we read how these things vanish away as in a dream, and hellish torments succeed in their place; Thus ambitious (b) *Herod* seemed to joy in his royall power and ornaments, in the flattering acclamations and shouts of the People, but he was suddenly smitten of an Angell, his Body eaten of Worms, and his Soul made subject to a worse Worm for ever. This is the fearfull end of all such as forsaking God seek their joy in worldly vanities. If therefore thou feelest thy heart to cleave unto any of these earthly things, Imitate the care and providence of Husbandmen, who, if their Corn by lying too neer the ground be in danger of being musty, they carry it up into an higher room, and so preserve it sweet and good: Much more oughtest thou, when thy heart is endangered to be corrupted by lying among these earthly matters, to endeavour to remove it to an higher place, *viz.* (c) Heaven, whereby it may be kept pure and sound. Do thus, and

z Isa.57.21.

a Luc.12.19.

b Act.12,22,23

c Col.3.1,2.

then boldly say with *David*, *Lætifica animam servi tui*; (*d*) Rejoyce the soul of thy Servant, for unto thee O Lord have I lift up my soul.

d Psa. 68. 4.

Secondly, let us seriously meditate on this wonderfull work of God, namely our Redemption through the death of his Son. Meditation doth deeply fix the works of God in our minds, and at the length will breed much joy and delight for them in our hearts. Observe what the thoughts of Injuries will work in the envious and malicious man; the quite contrary effects will the due Meditation of Gods Mercies produce in the Child of God: For as those heat the heart, and at the length set it on fire with hatred and desire of revenge; so doth this never cease from whetting the Affections, till it hath enflamed them with Love and Joy. (*e*) *Lord how do I love thy Law?* saith that Princely Prophet, *my meditation is therein day and night*; his frequent meditations were the means that did enflame his Affections. Oh Beloved, whence is it that the sweet mercies of God are buried in oblivion and forgetfulness? Whence is it that the holy Ordinances of God are so much slighted, so many Sermons quite lost and perished, the holy Sacraments so little relished, and the memory of our Saviour's Nativity so ingratefully neglected, but from the want of due and serious Meditation? Wherefore that we may be affected with the sweet Mercies of our good God, that we may delight our selves in the marvelous operations of his hands, take pleasure in doing his Commandements, and observing his sacred Ordinances, let us frequently meditate thereon. The more Meditation, the more joy and delight.

e Psa. 119. 97.

Thirdly, Let us truly and seriously repent. Godly sorrow for our sins doth no way hinder this spiritual Joy, but doth further and improve it rather; yea, it is so far from banishing it out of the heart, as that it causeth and exerciseth the same. They are not Contraries, but Companions, the one alwaies ayding the other. (*f*) It is all one, saith *Aquinas*, to joy in the presence of any good thing, and

f Ejusdem est rationis gaudere de aliquo bono, & dolere de ejus Impedimentis. Aquin.

and to grieve for its impediments or hinderances. It is possible therefore for the Soul to Joy in God, and to Mourn for Sin, which like a (*g*) Cloud strives to hide the brightness of his Countenance from it. Nay it is impossible for us to joy in God, unless we do truly sorrow for our sins: for faith is alwaies accompanied with true repentance, and as faith breeds joy by assuring us of remission and reconcilement to God, so repentance breeds grief and detestation for sins which we have committed against God. By sorrowfull repentance the Soul forsakes Sin, and so draws neer unto God, and the neerer it comes unto him, the more it participates of spirituall joy, according to that of the Psalmist, (*b*) According to the multitude of the sorrows I had in my heart, thy comforts have refresh'd my soul; he saith not after my sorrows were over, but even in the midst of them I found spirituall Joy.

g Isa. 59. 2.

b Psa. 94. 19.

To whom is Christ Jesus appointed to preach the glad Tidings of the Gospell, but to the (*i*) meek and broken hearted? to whom is he to proclame Liberty, but to the sad and afflicted Captives? whom is he to comfort, but such as mourn? to whom will he give Beauty for Ashes, Joy and the Garment of Praise for the spirit of heaviness, but to such as mourn in *Sion*? whom will he defend from the violence of all sorts of Enemies, but such as mourn, as (*k*) one that mourneth for his only Son, and such as be in bitterness, as one that is in bitterness for his first born? Wherefore let us now sow the Seed of Godly sorrow, that we may reap the heavenly fruit of spirituall joy; let us now repent seasonably, that we may rejoice perpetually; let us now mourn for our Sins, that we may be comforted; let us now acquaint our selves with hearty grief for the Commission of sin, that so we may have a true sense and feeling of spirituall Joy for the remission of sin.

i Isa. 61. 1, 2, 3.

k Zach. 12. 8, 9, 10.

Many there are who be very loath to venture upon the practice of repentance, very much afraid are they of growing religious, left hereby all their joy and mirth should

ſhould be dampt, and put to an end; but indeed there is no cauſe of ſuch fear; for all things conſidered, it will eaſily appear that religious & holy men are the only Joyful men in the World: for if they look up to heaven, there they find the Fountain of all joy for their ſouls to bath in. If they look into themſelves, and eſpy their ſins and infirmities, they joy in beleeving that they are pardoned. If they conſider any graces which they have, they rejoice in them as ſigns of their Adoption, and furtherances of their Salvation. If they look into externall matters, whatſoever they do, whatſoever they ſuffer, whatſoever they hold, whatſoever they loſe, are occaſions of joy unto them. Hath God given them Authority, Honour, Wealth? They rejoice in theſe, as means to advance the glory of God, and the benefit of their Brethren. Hath he denied them, or ſuffered them to be deprived of theſe, through the malice and injuſtice of men? yet they rejoice in that they ſuffer loſſe and diſgrace in the World for righteouſneſs ſake. Thus when we give our ſelves to the practice of Repentance, true Piety and Holineſs, our hearts ſhall be every way filled with joy and gladneſs. The ſad events and miſeries we meet with in this World, ſhall not be able ſo much to deject us, as the comfortable perſwaſion of our reconcilement with God in Chriſt ſhall cheer and revive us.

Laſtly, that we may have an abundance of ſpirituall Joy, we muſt truly and unfeignedly beleeve in Jeſus Chriſt: for ſuch only as beleeve ſhall have benefit by his Incarnation. It ſhall be no advantage unto us that the Son of God was conceived in the Womb of the Virgin *Mary*, if he be not (*l*) formed, conceived and born in the Womb of our hearts by a true and lively faith. O let our Hearts from henceforth become his Cradle, that ſo we may ſay with the bleſſed Apoſtle, It is not we but (*m*) Chriſt that liveth in us, and the life that we now live, is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himſelf for us. This conception and birth the World thinks not of, far different are the conceptions and births

l Gal. 4. 19.

m Gal. 2. 20.

of

of the men of this World; there is a conception and birth of (*n*) wickedneſs, (*o*) miſchief, falſhood, ſin and death: he (*p*) traveleth with wickedneſs, conceiveth miſchief, and brings forth falſhood, ſaith holy *David*, concerning *Cuſh* the *Benjamite*; and St *James* tels us, that (*q*) Luſt when it hath conceived brings forth ſin, and ſin when it is finiſhed brings forth Death. Theſe, theſe be the odious conceptions of this World; theſe are the monſtrous Births of theſe wretched Daies; O let us weep and mourn even for the barrenneſs of our hearts, that we do ſo little conceive of the Grace of Chriſt in our minds, and bring forth ſo little good fruit in our lives and converſations. We account the Virgin *Mary* bleſſed who had the honour to be the Mother of our Lord, and indeed ſo ſhe was, but had ſhe only conceived him in her Womb, and not in her heart, ſhe had without all doubt been eternally miſerable; ſo likewiſe it will be no advantage to us, that Jeſus Chriſt did take upon him our Nature, unleſs being conceived and born in our hearts, he make us partakers of his (*r*) Divine Nature: And this is only through a true and a lively faith in him. Faith is the Bucket wherewith we may (*ſ*) draw thoſe living Waters out of this Fountain and Well of Salvation. Faith is the Mouth wherewith we eat that Celeſtiall and Divine Food of our Souls. Faith is the hand wherewith if we do but touch that heavenly Phyſician, we ſhall preſently feel our Corrupt Natures to be healed, and his Divine Nature to be communicated unto us. By Faith his Merits, Sufferings, and Righteouſneſs are made Ours; if we do but put on this Wedding Garment of Faith we ſhall become Gods own (*t*) Sons; Chriſt Jeſus will become our Saviour, our Sanctuary, and our ſure Refuge and Defence from the Wrath of his Angry Father. If *Pilate* appeaſed the Wrath of angry *Ceſar* by putting on Chriſt his Coat; how much more ſhall God Almighty be pacified towards us, when as by a true and lively Faith we ſhall have put on Chriſt himſelf? O let us ſee that we have this Garment upon us, eſpecially addreſſing

n Iſa.59.4.
o Job 15.35.
p Pſa.7.14.
q Jam.1.15.
r 2 Pet.1.4.
ſ Iſa.12.3.
t Joh.1.12.

u Heb.3.12. out selves to the Lords Table. (*u*) Take heed lest there be in any of you an heart of unbelief. You know how severely the King in the Gospel dealt with him that came to the Wedding-Feast, not having on his Wedding Garment, he commands him to be (*x*) taken away, bound hand and foot, and cast into utter darkness; with no less severity will the King of Glory look upon such as presume to come to his holy Table without this saving Grace of Faith. Take heed then that thy Faith thou bringest with thee be a true Faith, such as (*y*) purgeth thy understanding from Errour and Ignorance, and thy heart from the Love, Custome, and Dominion of Sin; See that thy Faith be such as (*z*) worketh by love, (*a*) overcometh Temptations. Possibly you may deceive men with specious pretensions, yea, your selves also with groundless opinions and conceits of having those Graces which indeed you have not, but God you can by no means deceive; All things are naked unto him; wherefore I beseech you that ye be truly humbled and grieved for your sins past: Look up unto Christ Jesus that brazen Serpent by an eye of Faith, with an assured confidence of being healed by him; take up firm Resolutions and Purposes against all manner of Sin for times to come; and being thus disposed, come ye cheerfully to this heavenly Banquet of your Souls. Let not your former sins dismay you; undervalue not the Bloud of Christ, so as to think it insufficient to wash them all away: They shall never be mentioned unto you; This holy Sacrament shall seal unto you the remission of them all.

x Mat.22.13.

y Act.15.9.

z Gal.4.6.

a 1 Joh.5.4.

This holy Sacrament is not for those that are already perfect, but for the help and comfort of those that desire to tend toward perfection. It is our Saviour's own words, (*b*) *The whole need not a Physitian, but those that are sick, I came not to call the Righteous but Sinners to repentance:* And such as are sensible of the heavy burden of their sins are invited by him, saying, (*c*) *Come unto me*, &c. Not therefore sin simply, but impenitency and the love of sin it is that hinders a man from being a worthy Receiver of the holy Sacrament.

b Mat 9.12,13.

c Mat.11.28.

Wher-

Wherefore to conclude, Let us truly repent us of our former Sins; let us bath our Souls in the Fountain of Chriſt his Bloud, ſet open to waſh away our ſin and uncleanneſs, and then we need not fear but we ſhall find Mercy at the hands of God by and through the Merits and Mediation of Jeſus Chriſt. Yet far, far be it from us to reſt in our own Performances: Alas, our beſt Actions are accompanied with ſo many Imperfections, that when we have done our beſt in attending on his holy Ordinances, as in hearing his Word, receiving the holy Sacraments, or praying unto him, we have even then great cauſe to beg pardon at his hand for our manifold failings; yet our obedience and ſervice, though imperfect, if it be ſincere and unfeigned, he will accept for Chriſt his ſake. Wherefore let us be (*d*) ſincere in the Worſhip of God without hypocriſie, diſſimulation, or the mixture of (*e*) malice, and wickedneſs; ſo ſhall we in this holy Ordinance gratefully commemorate that Propitiatory Sacrifice of Chriſt our Saviour; herein ſhall our Faith be confirmed, our Communion with Chriſt increaſed, the Pardon of our Sins ſealed, our Reconciliation with God, and Reſurrection unto life Eternall, aſſured unto us.

d Mat. 23. 25. Col. 3. 27.

e 1 Cor. 5. 8.

The second Sermon.

Isaiah 9. 6.

The Government shall be upon his shoulder, his Name shall be called Wonderfull, Counsellour, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

IN the former part of the Verse you had a description of our Lord and Saviour, by his Natures Divine and Humane, united together in his Sacred Person; in these words you have him described by his glorious Offices, and Administrations, which he exerciseth in his Church. For Explication; *The Government shall be upon his shoulder*, that is, he only shall have power, might and strength, to rule and govern his Church and People; almost the like expression we have concerning *Eliakim*, who was to be substituted in the place of *Shebna*, (a) *I will commit the Government* &c. That is, he shall rule, govern, and order the People. In this was *Eliakim* a Type of Christ, into whose hand all Power and Authority is committed. He is called *Wonderfull*, in regard of those marvelous and wonderous works that he wrought for the Salvation of the Sons of Men; as namely the Assumption of the Humane Nature into the unity of his Person; the shedding of his precious Blood for Man's Redemption; the Regenerating of his Elect by his holy Spirit, and the Glorifying of them after this life ended; the consideration whereof made

(a) Isa. 22. 21.

פלא

that

that choſen Veſſell ſtand amazed, and cry out, (b) *O the depth*, &c.

b Rom. 11.33.

He is called *Counſellour*, becauſe he governs and directs his People by his word and ſpirit. He is called *the ſtrong God*, becauſe by his mighty Power he continually defends and protects his Elect from the violence of their Enemies. He is called *the everlaſting Father*, becauſe he only is the Author of Eternall life to his Choſen. He is called *the Prince of Peace*, becauſe he having once ſubdued, and wholly overcome our Enemies, he will endue us with perfect peace and quietneſs; to ſum up all in one propoſition, we may obſerve this Point of Doctrine, *viz.*

יועץ

אל-גבור

אבי עד
pater æternitatis

שר שלום

Doctrine.

Chriſt Jeſus is a Perſon immediately ordained of God, to rule, derend and reward his Church and People, whom he hath purchaſed with his own Bloud. That Chriſt Jeſus is appointed to be a King, to rule and govern his Church, we ſhall not need to go further than my Text for proof. *The Government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder.* He executes this his Regal Office, by governing his Subjects; which he doth both by the Scepter of his Word, and the Miniſtry of his Spirit; by the one he ſhews what he would have done; by the other he gives power and ability to do his Commands. God's *dicere* is his *facere*; whatſoever he commands by his VVord, by his powerfull operation he brings to paſs. The Prophet *David* ſpeaking of the great power of God in the Creating of the VVorld, ſaith of the Creatures, (c) *He ſpake the word and they were made*, &c. So (d) *Moſes*; So our Saviour no ſooner called *Andrew* and *Simon* from their fiſhing, but they (e) obeyed him: By his word and call he ſhewed them what he would have done; by his Spirit he made them willing and ready to obey him.

c Pſa. 148.5. Pſa. 33.6.
d Gen. 1.3.
e Mat. 4.19.

The Laws and Edicts of an Earthly Prince may give directions what to do, but can give no ability or power for performance: But the VVord of God accompanied with the (f) Spirit of Sanctification and Holineſs, is made a powerfull means unto us, whereby we may be able.

f 1 Cor. 2.10, 11, 12.

able both to know and do the things that are commanded us of God.

The VVord of God is the Rule whereby we are to regulate and ſquare our lives and coverſations; the holy Scriptures only can direct us in matters abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation, though in matters meerly circumſtantiall and indifferent, we are not alwaies to look for any particular expreſs command in holy VVrit, but we are left to the light of Reaſon for our direction in them; that this may the more clearly appear, we muſt note that Mens Actions may fall under a double conſideration; Either they are ſuch as for them ſimply God Almighty neither approveth, nor rejecteth us, and ſnch we call natural or indifferent Actions, which of their own nature are neither good nor bad: Or ſuch as are ſo approved by God, that they are neceſſarily required unto our Salvation; if we neglect the doing of them we ſhall never be ſaved; and if we perform them we ſhall never be condemned.

In the former ſort, we have a liberty in our ſelves to do or not to do them; as when there are many waies and means for the obtaining of one end, there is a liberty in us to chooſe one Medium, or means, and to refuſe the other; for Inſtance, for the ſuſtentation and preſervation of the body, there are many kinds of meats and drinks, and cloaths expedient and uſefull: In the VVorſhip of God there are divers outward Ceremonies and circumſtances, as namely, various times of worſhipping, places, poſitions, and geſtures of the Body, &c.

Now the end is neceſſary, and commanded expreſly in the VVord of God, but not every thing conducing to the ſame end: It is neceſſary that the body ſhould be nouriſhed and cloathed, but it is not neceſſary to uſe this or that kind of cloathing or nutriment. The VVorſhip of God is of abſolute neceſſity, but for that end, this or that time, or place, this or that kind of Poſition of the body, are not of themſelves neceſſary; theſe things we hold to be in their own nature indifferent, and the choice thereof to be in our own power, unleſs this Indiffe-

rency

rency be taken away; and this happens in three Cases.

First, when we deprive our selves of our own liberty, as (g) *Ananias* and *Saphyra*, who had liberty to sell or not to sell their Possessions, till such time as they had bound themselves by solemn purpose to sell them. g Act. 5. 4.

Secondly, when Almighty God doth precisely tye us unto, or restraine us from any one thing which in it self is altogether indifferent; there were many kinds of Garments of which *Aaron* and his Sons might have taken their choice, had not (h) God streightly tyed them to one kind of Habit. All kind of Meats in themselves were indifferent, and the Jews without sin might have made use of Swines flesh had not God Almighty forbidden it. h Exod. 28. 4, 43.

Thirdly when lawful Authority hath commanded or interdicted any thing in its own nature indifferent, then the indifferency thereof is taken away. *Jonathan* might have eaten hony, or forborn eating, had not the King his Father expresly (*) forbidden it. *1 Sam. 14. 27, 37, 38.

Thus in matters and things in their own nature indifferent, unless in those three above-mentioned Cases, there is a power in us to choose or refuse, to do or leave undon; what God neither commands nor forbids, the same he suffers with approbation to be done, or left undone. The Apostle personating the Christian Gentile in a defence of liberty in things indifferent, saith, (i) *All things are lawfull for me, but all things are not expedient*, &c. In indifferent things there is a choice to be used, all are not alike expedient and convenient; the expediency or conveniency of them is shewn unto us by our own Judgments and Reason, to the light whereof we are left for our direction in such Matters and Actions; but as for those Actions of the second sort, we can have our direction only from the Sacred Scriptures; Nature cannot teach us sufficiently what we must do for the obtaining of eternall life; the (k) naturall man (that is, man guided only by the light of Nature) perceiveth not, &c. Nature is altogether blind in matters concerning Salvation; i 1 Cor. 6. 12. k 1 Cor. 2. 14.

but

but this insufficiency of Nature is so perfectly supplyed by the light of Scripture, that there needs no other means to this end. *(l)* These things are written saith the Evangelist,&c. Eternall life is attained unto by beleeving in Christ, and that we might rightly beleeve, the holy Scriptures are given us for our *(m)* direction. The Testimonies of the Lord are pure, and perfect, altogether sufficient to their end, nor must we think that God in them hath omitted any thing which may be supplyed with Humane Inventions.

l Joh.20. 21.

m 2 Tim.3.16, 17.

Application. Two sorts of opinions therefore may be hence justly censured, the one of the Papists, teaching that the holy Scriptures contain not all things appertaining to Faith, and that they cannot perfectly and fully direct us in the way of Salvation, and therefore urge, as necessary, the observation of Humane Traditions; the other of such as would needs have an express Command in the Sacred Volume for all that they do, and judge every Action sinfull, for the which a man hath no Precept in the Word of God. As for the former, what can be more directly opposite to the Word of God than it? for hath not the Lord himself evidently declared the sufficiency of his Word by that express prohibition? *(n)* Nay, are not such as add unto, or take away from the Word of God threatned to have their Names raced out of the Book of Life? *(o)* But to answer some of their Objections they make against the perfection of the Sacred Scripture.

n Deut.4:1, 2.

o Rev.22.18, 19.

Object. First say they, *Many things there are necessary to be beleeved, which are not contained in the holy Scriptures, as namely the Unity of the Essence, and the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead.*

Answ. I answer, a thing may be contained in the Scriptures two waies, *viz.* either according to the Letter, or Sence by a good consequence; sometimes only the substance of a thing, sometimes the thing it self is expressed in significative words and voices: Thus the Unity of Essence, and Trinity of Persons in the Godhead are contained in the holy Scriptures, though not according to the Letter yet

yet according to the Sense by a sound consequence; though these words Trinity, Unity, Essence, *&c.* are not therein expressed, yet in the sense and meaning thereof in divers places of Scripture contained; as (*p*) *In principio Dii creavit, In the beginning Gods created*, &c. *Dii* denotes the Trinity of Persons; *Creavit* betokens the Unity of the Essence; so (*q*) *whom shall I send*, I in the singular number, behold the Unity of the Essence; or, *who will go for us*, Us in the Plurall number, loe the Trinity of Persons; so also in that Commission of our Saviour to his Apostles, (*r*) *Teach all Nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost; Into the Name*, not Names, noting the Unity of Essence; *Of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost*, shewing the Trinity of Persons. Thus though these words according to the Letter are not in the holy Scriptures, yet the sense, substance, and meaning thereof are in them; nor shall we be saved for approving of those words, but by a firm and constant belief of the things themselves signified by those words; which things themselves we find in the holy Scriptures.

p Gen. 1. 1. ברשית ברא אל הים

q Isa. 6. 8. את מי אשלח ומי ילך לנו

r Mat. 28. 19. Εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ, καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου.

Secondly, *St.* Paul (say they) *commends the* Corinthians *for keeping the Ordinances that were* (*s*) *delivered them, and promiseth to set things in order among them at his next* (*t*) *comming unto them, therefore all things necessary to be observed and done, are not expresly commanded in the holy Scripture.*

Object. 2.

s 1 Cor. 11. 2.

t 1 Cor. 11. 34.

I answer, the blessed Apostle in these places speaks only of matters Circumstantiall and meerly Ceremoniall in the Church of *Corinth*, and not of any Articles of Faith, or things necessary to Salvation; In these latter, only the holy Scriptures can direct us, but in the former we are to be guided by the Dictates of right Reason; what right Reason shall shew unto us to be most decent and orderly, the same must we do, according to that of the Apostle, (*u*) *Let all things be done*, &c. And hence is confuted that other opinion of those who would needs have an express Command in Scripture for all that they do, and judge

Answ.

u 1 Cor. 14. 40.

every Action sinfull, that hath no precept in the Word of God for its warrant; many places of Scripture there are which they usually wrest to maintaine this their fond and groundless Assertion, for brevity sake I will name only one, and that is, (x) *Whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin*, and hence they infer, *That to do any thing for which we have not an express Command in the Word of God, is sin, because not of Faith, Faith being grounded only on the Word of God.*

x Rom. 14. 23.

Answ. I answer, Faith is taken in holy Scripture two waies, *viz.*, strictly, only for a firm and constant apprehension of Christ and all his Merits as they are promised and offered in the Word and Sacraments, so *Rom.* 1. 17. or largely for any kind of perswasion of the truth of things credible: in the former sense and acception Faith is grounded only on the Word of God, the Promises of the Gospell; but in the latter acception, the Object of Faith extends it self further, as may appear by these Scriptures (y), *Though ye beleeve not me*, saith our Saviour, *beleeve my works*, &c. (z) *Except I see the print of the nailes*, saith *Thomas*, *I will not beleeve.* Many of the *Samaritans* beleeved on Christ upon the Relation of the Woman (a). Can any thing then be more plain, than that there may be a Faith, belief, or perswasion grounded on other assurance than Scripture? Might not the Jewes have been fully perswaded that they did well to think (had they so thought) that God the Father was in Christ, though they had no other ground for this their Faith, than those his miraculous works which they saw done by him? Might not *Thomas* have verily perswaded himself, that he did well to think that Body which was raised, to be the same that was crucified, though it was his sense only that gave him this assurance? for so it was; *Thomas*, (b) *because thou hast seen, thou hast beleeved*, Yea, might not those *Samaritans* have safely perswaded themselves that they did well to beleeve in Christ upon the Womans words, which said, (c) *He told me all that ever I did?* Now this kind of Faith the Apostle here intends, *viz.* a perswasion that what we do

y Joh. 10. 38.

z Joh. 20. 25.

a Joh. 4. 39.

b Joh. 20. 29.

c Joh. 4. 39.

is

is well done, againſt which perſwaſion, he counts it ſin to enterprize any thing: Seeing then that this Faith, Belief, or Perſwaſion, whereof the Apoſtle here ſpeaks, may be grounded on other aſſurance than Scripture, it cannot be hence proved that no Actions are lawfull or warrantable for which we have no expreſs Command in the holy Scriptures. Surely, not only the light of Scripture, but alſo that of Nature is given us for our direction in many of our Actions, nor may we imagine that God is diſpleaſed with us for following the light of Nature in thoſe things which are no way forbidden in the ſacred Scripture. In thoſe things where Scripture is ſilent, we may ſafely follow the guidance of our own Reaſon and Judgment. Not to admit this, what were it but clean to abrogate the Law of Nature? Yea, were it granted that nothing may be done without an expreſs Precept in the holy Scripture, what would the Scripture it ſelf ſeem but a ſnare and a torment to weak Conſciences, filling them with infinite perplexities, ſcruples, and doubts? Not that the Scripture it ſelf doth cauſe any ſuch thing, but that the neceſſity of this life urging men to do many things by the direction of the light of Nature, common Diſcretion, and Judgement; and on the other ſide, this Doctrine teaching them that to do any thing without direction in the Scripture, were to ſin againſt God & their own Souls; how can this chooſe but bring them even to their wits end? how can it chooſe but vex and amaze them? This once granted, it would follow that Parents ſhould cauſe their Children to ſin, ſo oft as they cauſe them to do any thing before they be of years to have knowledge in the Scriptures. Nay this admitted, it ſhall not be now with Maſters, as it was with the (*d*) Centurion in the Goſpell, but Servants being commanded to go, ſhall ſtand ſtill, till they have their errant warranted unto them by Scripture.

d Luc. 7. 8.

Theſe two opinions concerning the ſufficiency of Scripture extremely oppoſite to each other, and both repugnant unto the Truth, let us take heed of; let us not with the Papiſts detract from the Scriptures perfection; nor

with these fondly think it to be our only rule in every Action.

Nor is this Doctrine of Christ's governing his Church to be applyed only by way of confutation of those erroneons opinions, but also by way of reprehension of those lewd and accursed practices of such as will by no means be perswaded to submit themselves to his Regall Power and Authority, but dayly through their vicious lives do, as it were, bid battell to this mighty God, this King of Glory: and such are they who live in affected Ignorance, Atheisme, Blasphemy, Swearing, Drunkenness, Luxury, Pride, Covetousness, Maliciousness, and all kind of wickedness, not at all regarding the Prohibitions, or Precepts, Promises, or Threats contained in the Word of God; nor at all listening to the secret whisperings, no nor to the bellowings and loud roarings of their Consciences thereagainst: These oppose the Regall Authority of Jesus Christ, and say in the language of their corrupt practices with *Pharoah* (e) *Who is the Lord that we should obey him?*

e Ex. 5. 2.

Oh, how desperate is thy Estate, how dangerous is thy Condition, who dost not submit thy self to the Government of Christ? Can there possibly be any greater sin than that of Ingratitude? Can there be any greater Ingratitude than not to yeeld obedience to him upon whom thy being and well being dependeth?

Againe can there possibly be any greater folly or madness than to oppose thy self against God? What art thou that thou shouldst provoke him? Art thou stronger than he? *Who art thou that pleadest against God?* saith the Apostle, (f) in another case, *hath not the Potter power over the clay?* As the clay is in the hand of the Potter, so art thou in the hand of God, he can break and dash thee all to peeces whensoever it pleaseth him. Who ever hardened himself against God and prospered? *Pharaoh* refuseth to let Israel go at Gods command, and what followed? He was plagued with divers very great and fearfull Judgements, and at the last himself and his Hoasts were drowned in the Red Sea (g). *Senacherib* blaiphemes

f Rom. 9 20, 21.

g Psal. 136. 15.

phemes and raiſes againſt the holy one of Iſrael, and what becomes of him? In one night all his Hoaſt becomes dead Corpes, and himſelf is ſoon after murthered by his own Sons (*h*). *Herod* prides himſelf with the applauſe of the People, and gives not God the glory, and is preſently Smitten to death by Worms.

h Iſa. 37. 23.

(*k*) O conſider this then ye that forget God, *&c.* 'Tis no leſs than a great Argument of folly for one King inconſiderately to make war againſt another. *What King*, ſaith our Saviour, *&c.* (*l*) But far greater madneſs is it for a poor weak Creature to rebell againſt its Almighty Creator: thou feareſt to violate the Laws and Edicts of an Earthly Prince, who hath power to deſtroy thy Body; and wilt not thou be much more afraid to violate the Commands of the King of Kings, who is able to deſtroy thy Body and Soul in Hell? *Where the word of a King is there is power*, ſaith *Solomon*, and wilt thou dare to ſlight and contemn the word of this Great King, the Mighty God? O let us all be exhorted now to ſend our Lamb to the Ruler of the Earth, (*m*) to tender our Homage, offer our Service, and teſtifie our Allegiance with all humility and thankfulneſs unto this King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, our Almighty Redeemer. Let us throughout the whole courſe of our lives fear him who is great above all Gods; Let us confeſs his ſoveraignty, ſubmit to his Government, and tremble before him; Let us willingly aſſemble our ſelves together in the Courts of our God, and cheerfully flock to the Colours of our King, and obſerve and do what ever he commands. To this purpoſe is that Caveat, (*n*) *See that ye deſpiſe not*, &c. for motives conſider,

k Pſa. 50. 22.

l Luk. 14. 31.

m Iſa. 16. 1.

n Heb. 12. 25.

Firſt, that Jeſus Chriſt is ordained of God (as is already ſpoken) to be the King and Head of the Church, and Prince over the People of God, having all power in his own hand.

The Government is upon his ſhoulder. (*o*) *I have ſet my King*, ſaith God, *upon my holy Mountain*. Nay, he is appointed to be the only (*p*) Lawgiver to his Church, and

o Pſa. 2. 6.

p Jam. 4. 12.

q Act.17.31. (q) Judge of the whole World. O how shall we expect protection from this King if we rebell against him? how shall we look for mercy from that great Judge, if we despise his Laws, and cast his Precepts behind our backs?

Secondly, He hath wonderfully redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, and from the Tyranny of Sin, Satan, and Death, through the effusion of his own (r) Bloud; and shall we think that Christ Jesus hath been at this expence and charge for us, that we might live as we list? shall we imagine with profane Libertines, and corrupt Antinomians, that we are so redeemed from the Law, that we need not yeeld any obedience thereunto? Certainly we are redeemed to another end, namely, (s) *To serve him in holiness and righteousness*, &c. Christ Jesus hath given himself that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purge us to be a (t) peculiar people, zealous of good works. Christ Jesus hath freed us from the burden of the Law, but hath not quitted us from our duty contained in the Law; *The grace of God that bringeth salvation*, &c. (u) If therefore we will by no means yeeld obedience to his sacred Word, what do we but unthankfully slight and despise all that he hath done for our Souls? What do we but Crucifie afresh the Lord of Life, trample upon his Bloud, and count the Bloud of the New Testament an unholy thing, and do despight unto the Spirit of Grace (x)? O let us not be so damnably ingratefull to so willing a Saviour; Let us not any longer live unto our selves, but unto him that hath thus loved us, and given himself for us; Seeing we are his Purchace, let us henceforth give up our selves souls and bodies wholly to his Service. Let us worship and glorifie him in our (y) Bodies, and in our Spirits which he hath redeemed.

r Act.20.28. 1 Pet.1.17,18. s Luk.1.74,75. t Tit.2.14. u Tit.2.11,12,13. x Heb.10.29. y 1 Cor.6.19,20.

Lastly consider what a blessed and happy condition it is for us to be Subjects in the Kingdom of Christ. *Let Israel Rejoice in him that made him*, sings the Psalmist, *and let Zion be joyfull in her King* (z).

z Psal.149,2.

And indeed it will easily appear that there is great cause of joy in being a Subject to this heavenly King, if

We

we will but set before our eyes that infinite power, goodnes and greatnes that is resplendent in him: All which is implyed in those glorious Names and Titles which are given him in my Text, namely, *the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.*

1. He is an Almighty God, alsufficient, and depending on none, his Subjects are not charged with supporting and defending him, (as it is with Earthly Princes) but he defends (*a*) and maintains them, (*b*) he is the head of all Principalities and Powers, and the most Potent Ruler of all People and Nations (*c*).

a Col. 2. 9.
b Isa 9. 7. Isa. 32. 1.
c Dan. 7. 13. & 14. 27.

2. Nor is he only infinitely great, but also superabundantly good, hence he is called *the Everlasting Father*. It is the property of a good King to be *Pater Patriæ*, a Father to his Subjects. Kings therefore are called Fathers, not only in divine, but also in prophane Writers; The Senatours of *Rome*, and chiefe Governours were called Fathers of their Countries. The common name of the Kings of the Philistins was (*d*) *Abimelech*, signifying my Father the King, and *David* saith to his Subjects, (*e*) *Come my children*, &c. And to shew the greatnes of Affection, and those Bowels of Compassion which Christ hath towards his People, he is here called *the Everlasting Father*; he is alwaies (according to his gracious Promise) present with them, (*f*) to protect, defend, and provide for them.

אבימלך

d Gen. 20. 3.
e Psal. 34. 11.
f Mat. 28. 20.

Lastly, He is *the Prince of Peace*, by whose powerfull and effectuall Mediation (*g*) we have peace with Almighty God; and he having perfectly subdued and overcome our Enemies, we shall be placed in Tabernacles of Peace, and in safe resting places. What Enemies then shall we need to fear, if we be under the protection of so powerfull a King? What good thing can we possibly want, if we be under the tuition of so indulgent a Father? Who shall be able at any time to trouble or molest us, if we be the Loyall, and true Subjects to this Prince of Peace?

g Rom. 5. 1.

The (*h*) Queen of *Sheba* admires the Wisdome, Power,

h 1 King. 10. 7, 8, 9.

wer, and Greatness of King *Solomon*, but behold a greater than *Solomon* is here. That Earthly Monarch was but the shadow, Christ Jesus is the true and reall substance. If she therefore accounts them happy that stood before him, and were his Attendants; surely much more blessed are they to be accounted, that are Subjects to this King of glory.

i Psal. 144. 15. I will shut up all in the words of the Psalmist, (i) Blessed are the people that be in such a case, yea, blessed are they that have the Lord for their God; this Mighty God for their King. Wherefore (Dear Friends) let us now continue the true and faithfull Subjects of Jesus Christ. Let us take heed we do nothing wherewith we may displease the eyes of his glory. Let us willingly relinquish and forsake all our sins, and intirely give up our selves to his service; so shall we be defended by his Power, provided for by his Providence, and everlastingly rewarded with that Peace which passeth all understanding.

FINIS.